

Environmental Quality

The Corps carries out the Civil Works Programs in consistency with many environmental laws, executive orders and regulations. Perhaps primary among these is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. This law requires federal agencies to study and consider the environmental impacts of their proposed actions.

Consideration of the environmental impact of a Corps project begins in the early stages, and continues through design, construction and operation of the project. The Corps must also comply with these environmental laws and regulations in conducting its regulatory programs.

NEPA procedures ensure that public officials and private citizens obtain and provide environmental information before federal agencies make decisions concerning the environment. In selecting alternative project designs, the Corps strives to choose options with minimum environmental impact.

The Water Resources Development Act of 1986 authorizes the Corps to propose modifications of its existing projects -- many of them built before current environmental requirements were in effect -- for environmental improvement. Proposals the Corps has made under this authority range from the use of dredged material to create nesting sites for the waterfowl to modification of water control structures to improve downstream water quality for fish. In recent years, the Corps of Engineers has planned and recommended environmental restoration actions at federal projects to restore environmental conditions.

Related Links

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Point of Contact: Charyl Francois Phone: 206-764-5522 Email: Charyl.L.Francois@usace.army.mil